

Monday, January 20, 1997

DANGER'S FINAL WORDS

THE CURTAIN FALLS ON MONTRÉAL'S GREATEST CHAP BOOKSTORE

by Mark Narron

The entire Montréal literary community is in mourning after last week's announcement that Danger Bookstore will be closing permanently at the end of March. A plateau institution carrying hundreds of homemade local publications among its mixed inventory of high theory and low fetish, Danger has experienced a severe decline in sales since 1995.

Though Danger's closing may be a disappointment to the legion of browsers who crowd it daily, to local authors, poets and graphic artists, Danger's demise shuts the door on the city's most visible and supportive venue for chap books.

Chap books, self-made, self-published, and self-distributed "staples and Xerox" publications, represent most aspiring writers' first attempts at building an audience. The more creative ones showcase hand-sewn binding, glued-on objects and hand-painted artwork, possessing qualities of texture and craftsmanship impossible to replicate by a major press.

According to members of the Montréal literary community, when Danger closes shop, up-and-coming novelists, poets and graphic artists will lose the greatest outlet for independent work in the city's history.

"Danger puts chap books in their displays," says Chris Bell, a Montreal novelist whose chap books are some of Danger's biggest sellers. "You walk down St. Laurent Blvd. and there you are right next to Toni Morrison or something. Danger puts that kind of importance on the local writing. There are other stores that will sell your book, but they're usually second-hand stores catering to students. Danger's such a prime location, right on the plateau."

Bell's novel, *Tales of the Lost Chebah-ha*, was rejected by a number of major Canadian publishers before he decided to publish it himself as a chap book. He sold more than 150 copies out of Danger alone, garnering reviews in the Hour and the Mirror. And now, *Chebah-ha* is being looked at by some of the biggest publishing houses in the world.

"I'm getting all these nice letters from people who two years ago wouldn't give me the time of day," says Bell. "It's critical to have someplace as an outlet for your work, and an outlet that's a recognizable place, not some café

somewhere. Once you have an outlet, then it's viable to submit for reviews. And once you get reviews you're ready to make a career out of writing."

Simon Bossé, a local graphic artist who's been selling his comic books out of Danger for three years, agrees that the city is losing a key literary institution. "It's a bummer. [Danger is] one of the best stores to sell comics at. Other stores take a 40% profit margin from you, just like from a major distributor. Danger took a reasonable margin. They helped a lot."

Bossé, who sells his comic books in France and Holland as well as in Québec, claims that it is hard enough as it is to be a Montréal-based comic book artist. Danger's closing will stunt the growth of the local comic art scene.

"There's a shitload of artists in Montréal, but they need a good outlet. There are four or five other stores where I put my books, but I usually have such a hard time get-

ting a nice spot. I'll go back a month later and the books will be in a dark corner somewhere. But when you're starting out and you watch four or five copies getting sold at a place like Danger, you start freaking out."

Claude Lalumière, the owner of Danger and its sister sci-fi store, Nebula, knows the unpopularity of his decision to close the store but claims business shows no sign of improvement. "It's a very popular store," he says. "People talk about it all the time and it's mentioned in the media more than any other bookstore, but I wonder if people really care that much. The fact is that people come in and browse, but they never buy anything. It's nice to name-drop all over the place, but there's a clear lack of support."

Lalumière says Nebula will try to take up the slack of chap books and comics left by Danger, but he states firmly that Nebula is geared towards science-fiction and cult-film literature, rather than the po-

litical and cultural studies emphasis of Danger.

"The economy is shit," he says. "And it's definitely not in a temporary rut. And Nebula has a much more loyal client base."

From now on, writers, artists and chap book collectors will have to roam the city for chap book outlets. Or, like so many other frustrated artists, set their sights outside Montréal.

For those hoping to own a piece of history, Danger is currently liquidating their inventory at 10% off.



DAILY PHOTO BY LUCY ATKINSON

CARTER PUBLICIZES HIS "NEW VISION"

Recommendation to merge executive position draws heated debate

by Jason Chow

SSMU President Chris Carter may well determine what undergraduates will vote on in the next student referendum. Voted in last year on a mandate for greater representation and for restructuring, Carter released a new version of his discussion paper "A New Vision of SSMU" last Friday. The paper presented several suggestions for restructuring the undergraduate society.

The report recommended dividing the present vice president university affairs position into two separate portfolios: vp academic and vp student affairs. Carter believed that a single vp university affairs position has been insufficient in handling the workload. Don McGowan, the current vp university affairs, also agreed that a division of the portfolio would be appropriate

Carter also called for a merger of the presidential portfolio with another executive position. "Without a merger with another position the Presidency...is still something of a lame-duck figurehead." Carter suggested that the vp external and the presidential portfolios be combined, citing that the level of overlap between the two positions was "ridiculous".

But current VP External Chantal Da Silva said it's Carter's idea that is "absolutely ridiculous."

She admitted that the "overlap on paper is similar, but in practice it isn't." A merger between the two positions would be "an impossibility in terms of work," she said, and cited that the student society at the Université de Québec à Montréal had two executive members responsible for the external portfolio.

Carter maintained that the possibility to expand the executive to six members has not been ruled out, but he would prefer to see the number of executives remain at five to avoid the stalemate that could occur having an even number of executives.

But the roles of executives are only part of the debate as the entire composition of council is being questioned. Carter has also suggested that executives be elected on a slate — with students voting for entire executive teams instead of individual executives. To include student input on the issues, an open forum was held last week and will be continued this week.

Da Silva criticized the entire process of restructuring, calling it a "mockery," accusing it of being "rushed" and "short-sighted" be-

cause of its lack of broad-based consultation. "[Council] had to pull teeth to get the motion on open forum passed." She also stated that even the chair of the committee believed that the process lacked consultation.

But Carter attacked these accusations, calling them excuses for maintaining the status quo. He also stressed the need to carry through with the restructuring before the end of his term because it has been a long promise never fulfilled. "Ten years plus we've tried to improve the Society," commented Carter.

Open forums on SSMU restructuring continue this week across campus. The product of these forums and committee meetings will be presented in March where all undergraduate students will vote on a referendum question.

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Events

Tuesday, January 21

• LOAF organic food co-op meeting at 18h at 3647 University, 3rd floor. New members welcome. Info: Melanie or Rebecca at QPIRG 398-7432.

McGill Students' International Development Initiative meeting 17h, Shatner cafeteria.

Wednesday January 22

• McGill Choral Society Rehearsals for Misa Creola. No experience necessary for interested singers. Rehearsals every Wednesday at 19h30. Strathcona Music Building. 500 Sherbrooke St. W. Rm C-304, 2nd floor.

• LBGTM's Bisexual Group meeting in the Women's Union (Shatner 423) at 17h30.

• Canadian Institute of International Affairs presents Andrew Ignatieff, Mount Stephen Club (1440 Drummond St.), 17h15, \$5. Info: 933-9047.

Thursday, January 23

• LBGTM's Womyn's Group meeting in the Women's Union (Shatner 423) 18h30

Friday January 24

• Flux Magazine will be holding a benefit party at the Cabaret Music Hall. Host: J.R. Carpenter, Montréal author. Dominatrix "Bear" will perform with her partner. Special guest drag performers. 2111

St. Laurent, 22h-3h.

• LBGTM's Coming Out Group meets in the basement of UTC (3521 University) 17h30.

• Caribbean Students' Society presents "Big Jam '97" Shatner 310, 22h.

Monday January 27

• McGill Women's Union general meeting for all women interested in volunteering. 16h30. Rm. 423 Shatner. Info: 398-6823.

Friday, January 31-Sunday, February 2

• Alternatives to Violence Workshop co-sponsored by McGill Ecumenical Chaplaincy and Mile End Community Mission. Info: Gwenda Wells, 398-4104.

Ongoing

• Meals on Wheels seeks volunteer cooks and helpers for either Monday or Thursday mornings from 8h30-10h30. Info: 937-9471.

• A Taskforce is being formed to deal with the organization of events, activist campaigns on campus and the implementation of policies regarding issues such as harassment and safety. We need people with energy and/or ideas. Info: Women's Union, 398-6823.

• The Yellow Door Elderly Project. Help seniors in the downtown community Info: the Yellow Door (3625 Aylmer) or call Chi or Joanna at 398-6243.

Call for Submissions

Erratum

In the Jan. 16 issue of the Daily, the headline for the article about opposition to the Japanese pulp and paper company Daishowa ("Carrying on the fight: Friends of the Lubicon move south") incorrectly implied that the group Friends of the Lubicon was relocating in the U.S. In fact, the group is not pursuing any action against Daishowa.

The Daily regrets the error.



The Daily is looking for contributions of all kinds for its Black History Month Special Issue. Story ideas, photos, graphics and submissions are all welcome. For more information about the special issue, come to the Daily office and speak with Zac or speak with Verda at the Black Students Network.

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THE ENDOFS SCIENCE

The Beatty Memorial Lectures Committee presents John Horgan Senior writer, *Scientific American*

Tuesday, January 21, 1997, 6:00 p.m., Fieldhouse Auditorium, Leacock Building (downtown campus)

Information: McGill Welcome Centre 398-6555 The public is welcome. No tickets required.



THE MCGILL BOOKSTORE, INC.

CORPORATE AMERICA COMES NORTH

by Martha MacDonald

It's all in the name of profit: McGill may soon relinquish control of its bookstore to an outside company.

Phyllis Heaphy, McGill's vice-principal of administration and finance, and chair of the Senate Bookstore Committee, hopes "by the end of winter", the University will have decided whether to contract out the McGill Bookstore management.

Three companies submitted unsolicited proposals last summer to manage the bookstore and make it more profitable. A consulting firm hired by McGill released a report on the proposals in November. From the results of this report, the Senate Bookstore Committee is currently reviewing offers from only one company: Follette, a Canadian subsidiary of a large American company which manages a large fraction of the American university bookstore market.

The consultants said Barnes & Noble would be a poor business partner and rejected the Federa-

tion des cooperatives quebecoises en milieu scolaire, since its proposal asked for more power than the university can legally relinquish.

Follette, however, is willing to guarantee an increase of \$172,000 in profits per annum by cutting staff, increasing productivity and freeing up one floor of the bookstore. The company would reduce the store from four floors to three to either save money on heating and maintenance or to rent out the space.

Follette would also incorporate McGill into a used book network with six other Canadian universities.

But McGill Bookstore manager Horst Bitschowsky told the Senate Bookstore Committee that he is already pursuing new sources for used books. In fact, with the exception of the used book network, McGill's consultants believe all of the changes suggested by Follette could easily be accomplished by McGill's current management.

Follette plans to decrease labour costs by \$100,000 per annum by reducing "the 'backstore operations,' i.e. the part of the store the customer doesn't see," says John-David Stanway, the Post-Graduate Students' Society's representative to the Bookstore Committee.

But Follette did not explain how soon this \$100,000 would be saved, nor how they would follow through on their promise to reduce staff. Meanwhile, says Bitschowsky, the bookstore has already begun to reduce its staff by eliminating positions as soon as they become vacant.

"There are three problems with the proposals of the companies that offered to take over the management," says Stanway.

Most importantly, Follette will not guarantee the additional \$172,000 profit if McGill's enrollment drops by more than five per cent. According to the most recent Senate meeting, the total number of students at McGill has dropped for the first time in the last three years. The decrease from 31,592 students last year to 30,945 this year translates to a loss of just over 2 per cent, and VP Academic Bill Chan says enrollment is decreasing across the country.

Stanway also believes that if Follette takes over, the bookstore's tax status will change from a non-profit organization to a profit organization. The effect of higher taxes on profits was unclear in Follette's proposal.

Additionally, the proposal did not mention how McGill's new involvement in a used book network would affect the SSMU book exchange.

The Committee has student representatives from the undergraduate Students' Society of McGill (SSMU), the Post-Graduate Student

Society (PGSS) and Macdonald campus.

Both SSMU and the university administration have a veto in the Bookstore Committee because the university built the bookstore and all profits will go to SSMU once its mortgage has been paid.

SSMU VP Finance Jon Chomski wants to see this happen as soon as possible.

"Our planned position on this issue is to allow the University investigate different options with an emphasis on the loan being repaid faster, thus returning the profits from the bookstore to us sooner," said Chomski.

The Board of Governors has the ultimate say about management changes, but VP Heaphy promises changes will be made only with "the approval of all interested parties, including students."



DAILY PHOTO BY LUCY ATKINSON

REPRESENTATION OR MISREPRESENTATION?

CARTER WANTS MORE ACCOUNTABILITY

by Tamana Kochar

Article 2.4 of the SSMU Constitution says, "The Students' Society of McGill University is committed to groups, programs and activities that are devoted to the well being of a group disadvantaged because of, but not limited to, race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, or social class."

But what does that mean? How does SSMU follow through on its commitments?

As of now, these groups do not have direct representation on council. Twenty of the 35 members on council are faculty and school representatives.

According to Carter, the answer is direct representation for con-

stituencies on council.

This increased representation cannot be achieved without changing SSMU's constitution, and the Constitutional and Policy Review Committee is currently holding open forums to ensure student input.

Carter feels that SSMU needs representatives who concentrate on specific issues. Explaining why the Ghetto Safety audit and the Accessibility audit have been lost in bureaucracy, Carter said that this happened because, "we don't have representatives that specifically look after these issues."

One of the key problems outlined in a discussion paper submitted to the Policy Review Committee by Carter is accountability. Carter believes additional checks should be installed in the present system to ensure responsibility to the Society's entire membership.

Carter has also suggested eliminating executives' voting rights at

council meetings. He said the emphasis should be on the executive presenting to council and being subject to scrutiny by council. This would give council more power and increase efficiency and accountability.

Although some might agree to Carter's, "the-more-reps-the-merrier" philosophy, some do hold the belief that more representation is great for democracy but terrible for efficiency.

"Council is too big as it is," said Mark Feldman, SSMU's vp internal.

Although Feldman contributed to Thursday's open forum, in an interview he seemed to have given up on the idea of council doing anything.

"What matters is the work people do and not what motions get passed at council. The real work gets done behind the scenes."

He further remarked that, "what is important is that we need good people doing the work and we have good people."

letters

Beyond the Mainstream Spin

To The Daily

My thanks go to the Daily once again for your continued cultivation and illumination of the struggle against the lie of neoliberalism. For some weeks now I have been troubled by the fact that in all of the media coverage of the Peruvian hostage situation I have yet to come across an attempt to convey what motivated the action of the Tupac Amaru. However glaring (and typical) was this omission, it failed — to my discredit — to prompt me to search for some answers outside of the mainstream. Your interview with a member of the Tupac Amaru, presented by no less a dissenter than Mumia Abu-Jamal, was a welcome and informative corrective.

Matthew Watkins
U3 Arts

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editorial offices:
3480 McTavish St., Montréal, QC, room B-03, H3A 1X9
business and advertising office:
3480 McTavish St., Montréal, QC, room B-17, H3A 1X9
email:
daily@generation.net

editorial:
(514)-398-6784
business/advertising:
(514)-398-6790
fax:
(514)-398-8318

business manager:
Marian Schrier
assistant business manager:
Jo-Anne Pickel
advertising management:
Lety Matteo, Boris Sbedov
advertising layout and design:
Mark Brooker

contributors:
Jason Chou, Kathleen Frederickson, Anup Grewal,
Rex Huang, Jameela Jeeroburkhan, Ian Maher,
Martha MacDonald, M-J Milloy, Tamana Kochar,
Zachary Schwartz

co-ordinating editor:
Idella Sturino
co-ordinating news editor:
—
co-ordinating culture editor:
Kevin Siu
news editors:
Andrea Mason, —
culture editors:
Meredith Cohen, Mike Cullen
features editor:
Sonia Verma

daily francais:
Marc-Antoine Godin,
Loïc Bernard
photo editors:
Lucy Atkinson, David Ryther
layout and design co-ordinators:
Netami Stuart, —
office co-ordinator:
Andrea Cooke
project co-ordinator:
Mark Narron
information editor:
Vlad Nabok

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TINKERING WITH THE INDIAN ACT

Irwin ignores aboriginal concerns with Bill C-79

By Anup Grewal

Just days before Canadian MPs headed home for the winter break, one minister managed to quickly and quietly pass major changes to a law as old as Canada itself.

Innocuously titled Bill C-79, the changes to Canada's Indian Act — a law which governs the land, resources, laws and membership of Indian bands across the country — are both sweeping and controversial.

To the government, the proposals hail the beginning of their Red Book promise to implement self government for First Nations.

"This government's objective has been to provide empowerment to First Nations. We are looking at it as a move away from years of full federal control over peoples lives in a way that nobody would tolerate," declares Kate Macrety, communications assistant of Minister of Indian Affairs Minister Ron Irwin.

But to those who actually live and work in the communities affected, the changes are simply old wine in a new bottle.

"Irwin is continuing a centuries long approach of divide and conquer and of paternalism, saying that 'we know what is good for you and you will see better times ahead'," comments Ed Bianchi, National Coordinator for the Aboriginal Rights Coalition in Ottawa.

PASSING THE BUCK

The crux of Bill C-79 is to allow individual communities to negotiate greater responsibility over land, membership status and resources. Irwin claims this redistribution of responsibility will help bands get on the road to self government. "We are talking about a package that allows communities to get on with day-to-day things on their own," says Macrety.

This community approach is one of the most controversial aspects of the bill. "The changes do more to undermine aboriginal rights than to enhance them," says Bianchi.

According to Tony Hall, professor of Native American Studies at the University of Lethbridge, Bill C-79 attempts to make native communities into non-native municipalities ignoring traditional forms of collective government.

The Bill would allow band councils, through a simple majority vote to decide to take control over selling reserve land, manage resources and determine reserve membership.

James Bone, a councilor at the Keese Koo Wenin band doesn't believe that Irwin's 'self-govern-

ment' is adequate. "What this bill is saying is that all it takes to make a decision is a majority in council, without having consulted the membership."

Hall also criticizes the bill's shifting of government responsibility to another level.

"In Indian country, the chief and the council are seen as creatures of the Indian Act. They have been assimilated so the government is just passing its authority onto these people who have been groomed."

"There is tremendous symbolism to this," says Hall. "These changes to the Indian Act mean that the federal government still makes laws for Indians, it's not Indians making laws for Indians."

AN END TO TRUE SELF GOVERNMENT

For years, First Nations have been saying that Canada must deal with its First Nations on a 'Nation to Nation' basis.

Most recently, this was called for in a report by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP).

The Royal Commission specifically rejects 'tinkering' with the Indian Act. Instead it proposes going beyond this legislation towards a relationship between First Nations and Canada that was decided upon in the Royal Proclamation of 1763.

"The Royal proclamation recognized Indians as not individuals but distinct peoples, political units within a larger political unit (later Canada)" writes the RCAP.

This recognition, according to the Royal Commission is how Canada can fulfill its promise of an 'inherent right to self government' for First Nations — not through the Indian Act.

The Royal Commission proposes a new Royal Proclamation — one that would recognize the tragic history of the last five hundred years and serve as a blue print for self-government.

"What we are saying is that in order to improve the situation, we must make broad, fundamental changes — not this tinkering. We

can't achieve anything through piecemeal legislation that is inherently flawed to begin with," reiterates Bianchi.

What is feared is that Bill C-79 will undermine the ability of First Nations to move towards a new relationship with Canada as pro-

government.

"The non-response of the government to the Royal Commission is symbolic. Bill C-79 was put on the table just months before the Royal Commission was to be finished. This shows that there was no real will to take the Commission seriously."

WHAT SUPPORT?

According to Bone, unity within First Nations is already divided. He cites the fact that head of the Manitoba Assembly of Indian Chiefs, Phil Fontaine, and the head of the Saskatchewan Indian chiefs, Blaine Favel, have come out in support of Bill C-79.

Irwin is using Manitoba and Saskatchewan as his base of support. Yet according to Bone and Russell Diablo of the Assembly of First Nations, 90 per cent of Manitoba's First Nations communities oppose the bill.

Despite the overwhelming opposition to the Bill, Irwin is ready to push ahead with a second reading of the proposals when parliament reconvenes in February.

Pointing to the over 80 per cent of communities rejecting bill C-79 across the country, Chief Saul Terry of the B.C. Union of Indian Chiefs writes, "[Irwin] deems Indian peoples' rejection to the proposed changes as irrelevant and is determined to push these through the House of Commons."

What is striking is the way Irwin and the present Liberal government are following a policy very similar to successive Liberal governments since the 1960s.

The Royal Commission pointed to the way governments have dealt with First Nations and the Indian Act: "In many ways the history of the evolution of the Indian Act has been a dialogue of the deaf, marked by often vast differences in philosophy, perspective and aspirations between Canadian policy makers and Indian people."

Even more striking is the way Bill C-79 resembles a ghost from the Liberal's past — The White Paper of 1969 when Chrétien was Indian Affairs Minister.

The White Paper was intended to reduce federal jurisdiction over First Nations. Its approach was similar to Bill C-79 — proposing to delegate responsibility on a

community basis.

The White Paper was part of then Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's attempt to deal with "the Indian problem." The paper proposed gradually phasing out the treaties and assimilating — economically, politically and legally — aboriginal people into the non-aboriginal mainstream.

First Nation peoples unanimously opposed the White Paper and it was withdrawn.

"This was a process that we all saw as dangerous at the time," remembers Bone. He recalls how First Nations saw the White Paper as an insidious tool of assimilation of Indian peoples as well as a way for the government avoid its treaty responsibility towards First Nations.

According to many, the White Paper is rearing its ugly head once again, piece by piece. "The White Paper was never really killed, it was just shelved," observes Bone.

And now, he says, the puzzle is coming back together."



DAILY GRAPHIC BY REX HUANG

Africa Good

by Jameela Jeeroburkhan

Faced with an education system shaped by cutbacks and economic uncertainty, many programs search for solid ground. For McGill's African Studies program, that stability resides in this semester's African Studies seminar course — at least for the time being.

The African Studies program has been threatened since the spring of 1994 when a proposal was made to reduce its status from a major to a minor program. The following semester, the program was placed "under revision" and there was question as to how long it would last.

Almost three years later, the program still exists, both as a major (one of two in Canada) and a minor. This semester, a new semi-

CHANGING THE PROCESS OF CHANGE

The Future Visions Conference: vp says if you are 40 and have socialist tendencies, there is something wrong with

by Kathleen Frederickson

The pervasive sense of impending doom that surrounds many students' expectations for the future of the university is not new. A conference in which students and administrators discuss solutions to these dreary prospects is.

The Future Visions Conference organized by the Post-Graduate Students' Society (PGSS) in late November integrated the presentation of seven papers written by graduate students on possible improvements to McGill's operation with a panel discussion among university administrators, professors and students. The panel, consisting of Principal Bernard Shapiro, Vice-Principal Pierre Belanger, Professors Gary Wihl and John White, as well as students Anna Kruzynski, Regina Harrison, Marcella Trembley and Mike Toye was clearly divided. Principal Shapiro and Vice-Principal Belanger faced strong scrutiny from both their fellow

panelists and members of the audience.

While much productive discussion took place, tensions ran high between administrators and students.

According to Erin Runions, PGSS's vp external, the conference, "gave us an opportunity to say a lot of the things we've been wanting to say," however, she doubts the administration will end up adopting the students' recommendations.

The topics of discussion included questions involving links between the university and industry, lobbying for public funds, increases in tuition, the role of teaching assistants, and the processes used to deal with these concerns.

"We take the responsibility of student input seriously and thoughtfully," said panelist Regina Harrison.

However, comments by Vice-Principal Belanger seemed to put the administration's acceptance of such a principle into question.



"If you don't have anti-corporate, socialist tendencies at 25," he said, paraphrasing Churchill, "there's probably something wrong with you. Of course, if you still have them at 40, there's probably something wrong with you."

As one of Belanger's first statements, it seemed designed to undercut the validity of the conference.

Members of the audience attacked his stance, asking if he has any respect for students in the university he administers.

For Anna Kruzynski, panelist and PGSS vp-university affairs, "The decision-making bodies here are a joke," she said. A member of the university's Planning and Priorities subcommittee, she criticized that only one member

of the committee brings proposals forward.

"Nobody ever shows us alternatives," she continues, adding that such a system extends into most of McGill's varied committees and subcommittees.

"McGill thrives on the apathy of its students," she declares, "[It's time] to get people out of this rubber stamping mode."

In order to do so, PGSS will publish the papers and discussions that took place at the conference. Secondly, PGSS intends to complete a proposal for the future of the university, akin to Principal Shapiro's "Towards a New McGill" but researched, referenced and produced by consultation throughout all levels of the university community.

"If our document is endorsed by graduate students and academics," Kruzynski said, "we will ask Principal Shapiro to prove to us that it is not feasible."

African Studies Seminar a Sign

...BUT STUDENTS KNOW IT TAKES MORE THAN BAKE-SALES TO BUY A CHAIR

nar course is being offered. — due largely to the actions of African Studies students.

The African Studies Committee (ASC) held two demonstrations last year to protest the risks to diversity in education posed by budget cuts and shifting administrative priorities. Other measures taken by ASC include gathering 400 letters of support for the program and conducting dialogue sessions between professors and students about the future of the program.

"This seminar comes after a lot of effort, fight and convincing," says Koni Benson, a joint History and English student and ASC member.

Although Faculty of Arts Dean Carman Miller claims the approval

of funding for the seminar course predated last year's protest, he admits that the individual pleas of students were important. He maintains, however, that "the decision was necessary in itself."

But should it be up to students to secure their program's stability and convince the university of its importance?

"We shouldn't have to fight but we're not always given an option," explains ASC member and African Studies major Leigh MacRae. "It's a completely different academic climate today and it's necessary for students in certain small, under-represented programs to take responsibility."

However, MacRae feels the seminar should not require constant petitioning, especially since

nearly 30 students are enrolled, an extremely large number for a course of this kind.

"There are more students than normal. The demand is obvious but how do we meet the need?" asks Ismail Rashid, the seminar's professor.

According to MacRae, despite the demand for the seminar course, the program itself remains unstable in the long-term. "ASC has proposed the seminar for once every two years but we do not have a commitment from the Dean," she explains.

According to Miller, the seminar cannot be guaranteed permanence because "the financial constraints are not known."

"There is no mechanism for security, as in most interdisciplinary

nary programs," he adds.

Professor of History and African Studies coordinator Myron Echenberg recognizes this precariousness for interdisciplinary programs functioning on "soft funds" rather than the more permanent and secure "hard funds". "The program has no independent budget line," he says.

Ultimate stability for African Studies resides in the establishment of a program Chair to increase the number of courses with African content and to coordinate funding. But a Chair can cost between \$1.5 - \$2 million, money the faculty cannot provide right now. The program has been on a shortlist for funding since spring of 1996 and the faculty has made fund raising a priority.

Still, nothing is guaranteed.

But while the faculty awaits funding from the 'powers that be', ASC is investigating possible money-generating strategies to meet a proposed \$200,000. Some ideas include approaching companies interested in funding the program and pooling resources with other universities, such as the University of Montréal. As MacRae expresses, it takes "more than bake-sales" to buy a Chair.

"We're still at the researching stage," explains MacRae. "Our priority is to maintain the integrity of our program."

The seminar will act, in part, as a forum for such research by discussing further political action needed and the reaction of students to the program.

Trent U President Quits Amid Scandal

BITTER FEELINGS REMAIN AFTER
STRIKE SETTLEMENT

by M-J Milloy

Peterborough, Ontario. (CUP) — After a bitter three-week strike and a scandal over Christmas bonuses, three top administrators at Trent University are gone — but the deep divisions created in the past months remain.

Trent President Leonard Connolly has announced he will be leaving his job before the end of his term. The acting Dean and the vice president academic resigned before the New Year.

The latest resignation comes after a year of tense relations between the administration and the three unions that represent the school's faculty and staff. Those problems culminated in a three week strike by full-time faculty in November after the administration broke off talks during mediation.

The main sticking points between the sides were wage parity with the rest of Ontario's professors, the number of faculty at the university, and the fate of surplus money from the faculty pension plan.

The two sides reached an agreement in early December in a settlement that was viewed as a victory for the faculty. But hard feelings remain for many about the strike and the way it was handled by the administration.

Although Connolly cited "personal and professional" reasons for his premature exit, many believe it was inevitable in the bitter aftermath of the strike.

"Don't even mention that name to me," said one staff member, in an informal interview as she locked the door to her office at the end of one working day last week.

"His administration didn't treat any of us fairly this year. I just hope those resignations shake something up in those offices...we sure could use a change," said the staff member, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Those bitter feelings are all too common on the campus, and were echoed by Professor John Fekete, the head of the Trent University Faculty Association, the union of full-time teachers at Trent.

Calling the current administration the "most inept" he has ever had to work with, Fekete placed the blame for the strike on "administration intransigence" and lack of good faith during the pre-strike bargaining process.

Mediation, with our best efforts, achieved nothing. This administration did not come to the table to make an agreement, said Fekete. "They did not even make an offer before the strike deadline," he continued.

Fekete's complaints about the administration playing hard ball find their echo across campus, in the offices of Pat Shillemore-Martin, the head of the union representing Trent's non-academic staff. "We were very frustrated to see the faculty being forced to strike to defend what's important to them," she said.

Shillemore-Martin speaks from experience. Her union signed a contract with the administration in late summer, but only after a bargaining process that she felt was not taken seriously by the administration.

"We began bargaining last spring, without much enthusiasm on the part of the administration. They suggested quite early that we go to conciliation," or the administration would impose wage-levels unilaterally, she said.

Although her union "came very close to walking out on strike," they eventually settled with the administration.

President Connolly denies any lack of faith on the part of the administration.

"Both sides had strongly held views [during the faculty strike], and both sides worked in the best interests of their constituencies," he said. "On the administration side, we were working in the best interests of the long-term viability of this institution."

Shillemore-Martin believes that the strike has seriously soured her members' feeling for being part of the university community. She points to the controversial decision of President Connolly to award \$1,000 bonuses to non-unionized upper administrators just before Christmas as the reason.

"When they turned around and gave out those bonuses despite saying there was no money, after we haven't had a raise in seven

years...that really undermined my members," she said.

One of those members spoke of the bonuses in less delicate terms. "It's like we weren't feeling bad enough they had to throw us out on the street and back over us a couple of more times," said the staff member.

The bonuses also angered the members of the part-time faculty union. They quickly pointed out that the bonuses could have paid for the health plan they requested from the administration, but did not receive, because of a lack of money, according to the administration.

The hardline approach that the administration took against the staff and faculty was partly the result of provincial budget cuts, according to Shillemore-Martin.

That budget cuts are changing the way Trent works did not come as news to Jen McColl, a fourth-year English major.

Over the past four years McColl has witnessed Trent's famous commitment to small-group teaching erode in the face of faculty cutbacks. "When I first came here, my biggest class was 12 people. Now first-years have 25 in a class," she said.

Unlike most students, McColl became actively involved in the strike, and was one of almost forty students who occupied the president's offices.

"Nothing is going to change while students remain on the

fence, stay neutral. The administration's lives needed to be disrupted during the strike to show them what we were going through," she said.

Remaining neutral is exactly what the student government decided to do in order to best represent students, according to student council president Matt Gallinger.

"The faculty union never came out and said that they were striking in order to combat provincial cuts to education," said Gallinger.

Although McColl admits that the faculty were slow to pledge support for student concerns, by the middle of the strike the faculty union had made a promise to support students in their concerns for tuition levels and funding cuts, she said.

Both McColl and Gallinger hope that the recent administration resignations signal the beginning of better times at Trent. McColl hopes that the resignations and the strike are a wake up call for others at Trent to realize that the university is being changed by budget cuts and hard times.

For others at Trent, the divisions might take longer to heal. "There used to be a sense of community for me. After the way we've been treated, any desire to work at this place is gone" said one staff member, who didn't want to be named.

"I'm just working nine to five now. Just nine to five."

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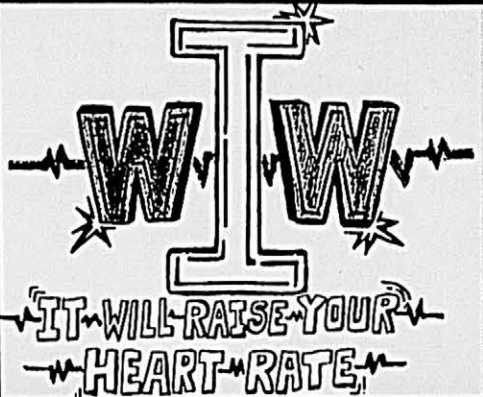
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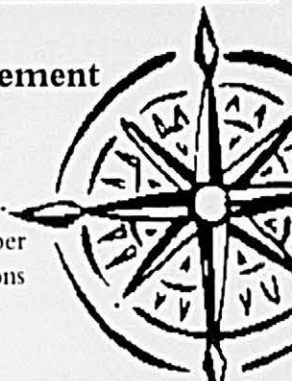
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